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CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF
FOOD & AGRICULTURE

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JOIN ME AT THESE UPCOMING EVENTS IN FEBRUARY:

- **FEBRUARY 1 - MODESTO: FARM BILL PROPOSALS.** USDA Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns will be at the [Stanislaus County Agriculture Center](#), from 8 AM -9 AM, to present his report on the proposals that were developed as a consequence of the USDA's Farm Bill Forums held across the country last year.
- **FEBRUARY 13 - TULARE: WATER BOND PROPOSITIONS.** Resources Agency Secretary Mike Chrisman, Jason Peltier, Deputy Assistant Secretary at the U.S. Department of the Interior and I will chair a session at the Theatre Room from 10:30 AM to Noon, on opening day of the [World Ag Expo](#). E-mail JonnaLee Henderson (jhenderson@cdfa.ca.gov) for more information.

**Agricultural Crop Freeze
Damage Estimates Now
Exceed \$1 Billion.**

Freeze Damage: I've been inspecting the widespread cold damage to agricultural and nursery crops throughout the state this month, from [San Diego to the Central Valley](#). The destructive effects resulting from this freeze have eclipsed those of cold weather events in 1990 and 1998. The recent extreme weather conditions have had a devastating impact on our agricultural industry, resulting in significant losses to our citrus, avocado, strawberry, vegetable and nursery crops. The impact alone to fresh citrus is estimated at \$800 million dollars. I commend Governor Schwarzenegger for his quick response to aid the counties that have suffered damages. A [State of Emergency](#) has been declared for 18 counties and the Governor has asked the USDA to designate 20 counties as [Disaster Areas](#), clearing the way for low interest loans to help producers recover from production and physical losses. I've met with key USDA staff and shared with them firsthand the damages I saw during my tours of hard-hit areas around the state, including Fresno, Tulare, Ventura, San Bernardino, and northern San Diego County. I would like to thank the [agricultural commissioners](#) of these counties for their tireless efforts to assist their farmers and producers in getting relief.



The effects of this freeze will ripple through the [economy and impact many communities and thousands of works](#) who depend on good harvests for their livelihoods. The U.S. Small Business Administration approved the Governor's request to provide assistance from their Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program to 40 California counties (20 declared county disaster areas and 20 contiguous counties) impacted by the severe cold weather.



Executive Order: On a more positive note for California agriculture, renewable energy and the environment, the Governor signed an Executive Order establishing a groundbreaking [Low Carbon Fuel Standard \(LCFS\)](#) for transportation fuels sold in California. This is an encouraging development for agricultural producers involved with the state's emerging biofuels industry. By 2020 the standard will reduce the carbon intensity of California's passenger vehicle fuels by at least 10 percent. This first-of-its kind standard will support AB 32 emissions targets as part of California's overall strategy to fight global warming.

25x'25: I'm pleased to report that Governor Schwarzenegger was awarded the [Sustainable Development Leadership Award](#) by the Leadership of the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit for implementing environmental policies that have a far-reaching impact on the global community. I strongly support the Governor's ambitious goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and continue to work very hard to see a higher usage of renewable fuels. To show my support and emphasize the vital importance of an agricultural presence in the renewable energy sector, the CDFA hosted the 25x'25 steering committee, a national coalition on renewable energy (www.25x25.org). 25x'25's vision is that by 2025, America's farms, forests and ranches will provide 25 percent of the total energy consumed in the United States while continuing to produce safe, abundant and affordable food, feed and fiber.



Last September, Governor Schwarzenegger endorsed the initiative and [designated me to represent California on the National Steering Committee](#). CDFA held a joint forum on renewable energy with the 25x'25 steering committee and the [State Board of Food and Agriculture](#). Senior Advisor to the Governor Sean Walsh addressed the forum on the

Governor's perspective on renewable energy. Nobel Prize winner, Dr. Steven Chu from the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab gave a very interesting presentation on the Lab's [Helios Project](#). The 25x25 steering committee and state board also went on an educational renewable energy tour around California. We visited Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) where we learned about [SMUD's Renewable Energy Program](#). Next we went to UC Davis where we heard presentations on their research of renewable energy production and economic impact, and toured their [Anaerobic Phased Solids Digester \(PDF\)](#). Finally, we visited the Lodi Wine and Visitors Center where we heard presentations from Sacramento Rendering, [Western United Dairymen](#), [PG&E](#), [Pacific Ethanol](#) and the [Lodi Viticulture Sustainability Program](#). The visit from 25x25 renewed my dedication to and belief that California farmers and ranchers have a most critical role in a national increase of renewable energy use. Being the largest agricultural producer in the country, we can be a key player in helping the nation achieve energy independence, resulting in enhanced national security, improved environment and a revitalized rural economy.



School Gardens: At Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's Inaugural Fair "Celebrating the Green Dream" on January 4 the [California School Garden Network \(CSGN\)](#), of which CDFA is a member, attracted the attention of many kids and adults alike with its wheelbarrow flower garden display, framed vegetable garden display, walking seven-foot broccoli stalk, and interactive area for kids to plant celery to take home. Tim Alderson, CSGN Chairman, was on hand to greet all visitors. The video below shows some highlights from this event.



► (Download [Free Flash Player](#))

Children weren't the only ones drawn to this booth. [First Lady Maria Shriver](#), who is also the [Honorary Chairperson of CSGN](#), enjoyed touring the booth along with her son Christopher Schwarzenegger and her mother Eunice Kennedy-Shriver. Christopher even potted up his own celery plant.

To fulfill their mission of having a garden in every California School and promote the benefit of garden-based education, CSGN brings garden resources together for educators across the state. Thanks go to **Speedling, Inc., California Association of Nurseries and Garden Centers, Orchard Supply and Hardware** and **Earthbox, Inc.** for their donations to this booth.

Retirement: Our CDFA Undersecretary A. J. Yates announced his retirement from CDFA, effective the 15th of this month. Following three decades of farming in Fresno County, the 72-year old Yates started his second career—as a public servant—at CDFA in 1991. He worked under secretaries Henry Voss, Ann Veneman and William (Bill) Lyons, Jr. until 2000 and, following that, was tapped by then-USDA Secretary Veneman as administrator of the federal agency's Agricultural Marketing Service.



A.J. returned to CDFA in 2004 to work with me, and I consider him one of the leading statesmen of California agriculture – a rare talent with a deep, intuitive understanding of both farming and government. I know he's anxious to return to his family in Kerman, and we wish him the very best. In a letter to me, he wrote, "It has been my great pleasure to work with truly creative thinkers who believe that farming will continue to be the cornerstone of California's economy for many years to come. Governor Schwarzenegger is certainly one of the strongest proponents of this bright future for agriculture and I have valued his vision."

Thank you A. J. for your wise and experienced counsel. We'll miss you here at CDFA.

After our recent damaging freeze, I think we're all looking forward to a good spring growing season.

As always, thank you for your support. Feel free to contact my office with any questions or concerns.

A.G. Kawamura

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